

**National EPA-Tribal Science Council (TSC)
Conference Call Roll Call and Key Discussion Points
Monday, June 15, 2020
2:00–3:30 p.m. EDT**

Roll Call

Tribal Caucus

- ☐ Region 1: William (Billy) Longfellow
(Passamaquoddy at Sipayik)
- ☐ Region 1 *Alternate*: Trevor White
(Passamaquoddy Tribe of Indian Township)
- ☒ Region 2: Neil Patterson (Tuscarora Nation),
Chair
- ☐ Region 3: Vacant
- ☐ Region 4: Katie Tiger (Eastern Band of
Cherokee Indians)
- ☐ Region 4 *Alternate*: Jerry Cain (Mississippi
Band of Choctaw Indians)
- ☐ Region 5: Vacant
- ☒ Region 6: Craig Kreman (Quapaw Tribe)
- ☐ Region 6 *Alternate*: Vacant
- ☒ Region 7: Page Hingst (Santee Sioux Nation of
Nebraska)
- ☐ Region 7 *Alternate*: Misha Mazurkewycz (Ponca
Tribe of Nebraska)
- ☐ Region 8: Joshua Tweeton (Spirit Lake Tribe)
- ☐ Region 8 *Alternate*: Allyson Two Bears
(Standing Rock Sioux Tribe)
- ☒ Region 9: Shasta Gaughen (Pala Band of
Mission Indians)
- ☐ Region 9 *Alternate*: Crystal Robinson (Quartz
Valley Indian Reservation)
- ☐ Region 10: Lee Juan Tyler (Shoshone-Bannock
Tribes)
- ☐ Region 10 *Alternate*: Kelly Wright (Shoshone-
Bannock Tribes)
- ☐ Region 10 (Alaska): Alexis Wagner (Metlakatla
Indian Community)

EPA Caucus

- ☐ Region 1: Vacant
- ☒ Region 2: Kai Tang
- ☒ Region 3: Regina Poeske
- ☒ Region 4: Dawn Taylor
- ☐ Region 5: Luke Hullinger
- ☐ Region 5 *Alternate*: Carole Braverman
- ☒ Region 6: Alexandra (Alexa) Olson
- ☒ Region 7: Christopher (Chris) Taylor
- ☒ Region 8: Monia Ben-Khalid
- ☐ Region 8: Justin Bleiler
- ☒ Region 9: Rebecca Jamison
- ☒ Region 10: Lon Kissinger
- ☒ AIEO: Francine St. Denis
- ☐ OAR: Amanda Kaufman
- ☐ OCHP: Ted Coopwood
- ☒ OCSP: Karen Hamernik
- ☐ OCSP *Alternate*: Amanda Hauff
- ☒ OLEM: David Charters
- ☒ OMS: Beth Jackson
- ☒ ORD: José Zambrana, Chair
- ☒ ORD: Brenda Rashleigh
- ☒ OW: Karen Gude

Support Personnel

- ☒ Monica Rodia, TSC Executive Secretary
- ☒ Harichandana Karne, EPA ORD OSP
- ☒ Kristen LeBaron, Support Contractor (SCG)

Action Items

1. TSC members will read the monthly teleconference minutes to ensure that they are aware of current activities, news and action items.
2. Tribal Representatives and regional EPA Representatives will contact their Regional Tribal Operations Committees (RTOCs) to be added to RTOC meeting agendas to present about the TSC's efforts to gather research methods and protocols that can be applied when working with Indigenous communities.

3. EPA Representatives from program offices will contact their associated EPA-Tribal Partnership Groups to discuss the TSC's efforts to gather research methods and protocols that can be applied when working with Indigenous communities.
4. Monica Rodia and Kristen LeBaron will work together to finalize the TSC Action Plan PowerPoint presentation so that TSC members can use it to present to their RTOCs, EPA-Tribal Partnership Groups and other relevant tribal organizations.
5. Neil Patterson will contact the National Tribal Caucus (NTC) about reaffirming the TSC's mission.

Key Discussion Points

Roll Call and Distribution of Meeting Minutes

- Monica took the roll and explained that the May virtual meeting minutes had been finalized and distributed.
- TSC members should read the minutes each month to ensure that they are aware of current activities, news and action items.

Caucus Report Outs

- Neil reported that the Tribal Caucus had met the previous Thursday. The discussion focused on the TSC Action Plan PowerPoint presentation, which highlights the TSC's approach for collecting examples of Indigenous research frameworks, protocols and methodologies. The Tribal Representatives also discussed contaminants of concern and connecting tribes with the right people to move forward with research in this area, especially the National Tribal Toxics Council. The Tribal Caucus decided to use the Zoom video chat format for future Tribal Caucus calls, so Kristen is assisting with scheduling monthly Zoom calls for the Tribal Caucus.
- José Zambrana reported that the EPA Caucus had met the previous week and also had discussed action plan development. The group discussed the systematic review of subsistence seafood consumption, which has begun, and Lon Kissinger's work on EPA-Tribal Environmental Plans and an associated database.

Discussion of Research Frameworks Project Goals

- The Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC) has provisionally accepted the TSC's symposium proposal on Indigenous research methodologies for its fall meeting. Three abstracts have been received. The plan is to move to a hybrid online/in-person format, with presenters being encouraged to record their presentations ahead of time.
- Tribal Caucus members will use the TSC Action Plan PowerPoint, which Monica and Kristen will finalize, to present to their regions so that tribes can understand the purpose of this effort, which stems from conversations about the EPA lead curriculum that occurred during the TSC's Fall 2017 Face-to-Face Meeting in Phoenix, Arizona.
- The question of whether EPA research is in tune with tribal and Indigenous research frameworks has arisen. Is EPA trying to "fit a square peg in a round hole"? Indigenous peoples are developing their own research frameworks, protocols and agreements that allow them to participate equally with such organizations as EPA. In the past, these organizations have conducted scientific research in these communities without equal participation.

- The TSC can work with EPA's Office of Research and Development to inform EPA scientists that tribes have their own research policies and needs regarding scientific research. To do so, the TSC must collect examples from tribes. The TSC Action Plan PowerPoint is a tool to help TSC members to collect information about projects that have implemented these frameworks at project initiation to ensure that the data produced meet tribal needs, are owned by tribes, and further tribes' self-determination, survival and recovery.
- The TSC Action Plan PowerPoint describes the purposes of this effort, which are to better understand data and research needs from a tribal community perspective, identify examples of data partnerships between EPA and tribes, gather available tribal data agreements and protocols, analyze the gathered information to identify threads and focus areas (e.g., protection of cultural data), and collate and house the information in an openly available repository.
- David Charters recommended that the NTC reaffirm the TSC's mission. Neil volunteered to take the lead on this. Perhaps NTC representatives could attend a future TSC monthly call.
- David recommended that tribal students be encouraged to present posters at the upcoming SETAC meeting.
- Lon commented that Region 10 can assist in two areas. First, Region 10 participated in tribal surveys in Idaho using a tribal college institutional review board (IRB) to address data-custody issues. Discussions focused on data availability, particularly the use of tribal data in a regulatory context (e.g., fish consumption rates, water quality standards). Second, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game has been collecting community harvest data for berries, fish, game and so forth to be used for Superfund risk assessment. James Fall in the Subsistence Section of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game is a good resource and could present at a future TSC conference call.
- Neil recommended developing a glossary to establish the terminology of this effort and how research frameworks and policies are expressed. For example, IRBs are central to efforts to establish fair research because they help to determine whether at-risk populations are protected. Tribal cultural committees also may be required to approve some research projects. "Nondisclosure agreement" is another term of interest to be included.
- Lon noted that an interesting "rubber meets the road" situation is when tribal data affect regulatory processes that involve nontribal economies.
- José explained that the Chairs of EPA-Tribal Partnership Groups are invited to NTC meetings, and the TSC supports the TSC Chair to attend these meetings. This support provides an opportunity for the TSC to explain this effort to the NTC to obtain feedback and support.
- Tribal Representatives and regional EPA Representatives agreed to contact their RTOCs about presenting this topic at their RTOC meetings to obtain input. EPA Representatives from program offices will contact their associated EPA-Tribal Partnership Groups to discuss this effort and obtain their input.
- Chris Taylor wondered how EPA can have a conversation so that the research it performs with tribes truly meets their science needs. Currently, the approach identifies only their science priorities. He would like to visit tribes later in the year to discuss this issue on a one-on-one basis, and it would be helpful for the TSC to develop a framework to facilitate these conversations.
- The TSC can present about this effort during its virtual seminar session at the virtual Tribal Lands and Environment Forum (TLEF) in August.

- The TSC could broadcast its efforts to collect this information in tribal newsletters, such as those published by the Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP).
- The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Office works with Tribal Historic Preservation Officers on data collection and sharing issues, particularly in terms of items of cultural significance. The National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers, of which Shasta Gaughen is the Chair, has experience in protecting cultural data and developing IRB procedures for working with tribes. Shasta noted that the cultural importance of environmental actions is not considered often enough.
- Neil displayed a slide that he had added to the TSC Action Plan PowerPoint that describes tribal research frameworks and policies for engagement with nontribal scientists. These include tribal resolutions, research agreements, data-management plans, Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPs), cultural committee review processes, IRB agreements and nondisclosure agreements.

Announcements

- The National Tribal Operations Committee meeting tentatively has been scheduled for September in Washington, D.C.
- The Office of Water (OW) is holding webinars that may be of interest to those who work with the Clean Water Act Section 401 Certification Rule, which was finalized on June 1. The first public webinar will be held on June 17 at 2:00 p.m. EDT. The webinar will be recorded and made available for those who cannot attend. Information may be found at www.epa.gov/cwa-401/final-rule-clean-water-act-section-401-certification-rule. OW also will hold a series of webinars for states and tribes to discuss implementation of the Navigable Waters Protection Rule: Definition of “Waters of the United States.” The next two webinars in this series will be held on June 16 and 23. TSC members who would like more information can contact Karen Gude.
- The Office of Mission Support is developing a QAPP training session with ITEP to be held at the virtual TLEF in August. Beth Jackson can keep the TSC apprised as the session’s scope is determined and the session itself is developed. Monica added that TLEF is co-sponsored by EPA’s Office of Land and Emergency Management.